

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 195437

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT BUENOS AIRES 6668 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
BRASILIA CARACAS MEXICO SAN JOSE QUITO 5 SEPTEMBER.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 6668

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XM, AR, CU, US

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER VIGNES DISCUSSES CUBA ISSUE
AND HIS TRIP TO US

REF: BUENOS AIRES 6353

1. AT FONMIN VIGNES' REQUEST, I CALLED ON HIMAT MINISTRY
AT 11 AM TODAY (SEPT 4) ACCOMPANIED BY ACTING CHIEF
POLITICAL SECTION SMITH. WE DEPARTED AT 12:10 PM AFTER
A FRANK DISCUSSION. HE LED OFF BY VOICING CONCERN THAT
THREE "NORTHERN" COUNTRIES WERE TRYING TO SEIZE INITIATIVE
ON ISSUE OF RAPPROCHEMENT WITH CUBA. ARGENTINE, OF COURSE,
FAVORED RAPPROCHMENT BUT BELIEVED IT MUST BE APPROACHED IN
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RIGHT WAY (OBVIOUSLY, THE ARGENTINE WAY). DEMARCHE WHICH LEFT

OUT ENTIRE SOUTHERN CONE WAS A MISTAKE, HE SAID. HE RECALLED THAT HE AND SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD DISCUSSED THE MATTER AT LENGTH LAST YEAR AND HAD, HE BELIEVED, AGREED UPON A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE COURSE. HE BELIEVED THAT COURSE SHOULD BE FOLLOWED AND HE WAS CONCERNED THAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS (READ, MEXICO, COSTA RICA AND ECUADOR) MIGHT STEP IN AND UPSET THE WHOLE PROCESS. HE SAID HE HAD NOTED FONMIN RABASSA'S VISIT IN WASHINGTON AND PLAY IT HAD RECEIVED IN PRESS AS KEY STEP IN CHANGING OAS POSITION ON CUBA. VIGNES SAID HE NOT CERTAIN MATTERS COULD BE SOLVED AS QUICKLY AS SOME SEEMED TO WISH AND HE STRONGLY ADVANCED ARGENTINA AS THE MOST LOGICAL COUNTRY TO CONTINUE THE CUBAN INITIATIVE THOUGH HE DID NOT SUGGEST THAT OTHERS MIGHT NOT PARTICIPATE. ARGENTINA, HE SAID, WAS NOT INTERESTED IN STERILE MANEUVERS; RATHER, IT BELIEVED ALL SIDES SHOULD OUTLINE THEIR POSITIONS FRANKLY AND IN VERY PRAGMATIC MANNER.

2. IN VIEW OF DEVELOPING INITIATIVES ON CUBA AND RAPIDLY APPROACHING MPM IN BUENOS AIRES, VIGNES SAID HE CONSIDERED IT IMPERATIVE THAT HE DISCUSS MATTERS WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER IN WASHINGTON DURING HIS SEPT VISIT. HE DID NOT WISH TO DISCUSS UNGA MATTERS; RATHER, HE FELT IT VERY IMPORTANT THAT THEY DECIDE WHAT THEY WANT TO COME OUT OF MPM IN MARCH.

3. VIGNES INDICATED HE AND HIS WIFE WILL DEPART BUENOS AIRES NIGHT SEPT 13, WILL FLY DIRECTLY TO NEW YORK, ARRIVING SEPT 14. THEY WILL SAME DAY ENTRAIN FOR WASHINGTON, ARRIVING THERE LATE SEPT 14. VIGNES PLANS TO STAY AT MADISON HOTEL AND WILL REMAIN IN WASHINGTON UNTIL SEPT 21 WHEN HE PLANS RETURN TO NEW YORK FOR UNGA. HE SCHEDULED TO SPEAK AT LATTER ON SEPT 24 AND MAY REMAIN IN NEW YORK FOR SEVERAL DAYS. IN WASHINGTON, HE WOULD BE AT SECRETARY'S DISPOSAL. IF LATTER COULD NOT RECEIVE HIM, HE SAID JOVIALY, HE WOULD HAVE PLEASANT REST IN OUR LOVELY CITY. OBVIOUSLY VIGNES EXPECTS AND CONSIDERS IT IMPORTANT THAT HE BE RECEIVED.

4. DURING CONVERSATION VIGNES TOOK CALL IN OTHER ROOM FROM AMBASSADOR ORFILA. HE RETURNED ALL SMILES TO SAY THAT MATTER OF ARGENTINA'S ROLE IN DEVELOPING INITIATIVES ON CUBA HAD NOW BEEN SOMEWHAT CLARIFIED. HE HIMSELF HAD TALKED TO VENEZUELEN
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FONMIN AND ORFILA HAD TODAY TALKED TO FACIO. LATTER WAS PROPOSING THAT HE ADD PARAGRAPH TO SPEECH HE (FACIO) WOULD GIVE AT OAS SESSION IN WASHINGTON SEPT 16 IN WHICH HE WOULD GIVE FULL RECOGNITION TO ORIGINAL ARGENTINE INITIATIVE IN CUBA ISSUE. VIGNES HIMSELF WOULD THEN BE INVITED TO SPEAK. VIGNES SAID HE HAD NOT YET DECIDED HE WOULD ACCEPT, BUT THOUGHT HE WOULD DO SO SINCE IN SUCH A SPEECH HE WOULD BE ABLE TO PUT MATTER OF RAPPROCHMENT WITH CUBA IN ITS PROPER PERSPECTIVE.

5. VIGNES VERY CONCERNED THAT INITIATIVE ON LIFTING CUBAN SANCTIONS WAS BEING TAKEN AWAY FROM ARGENTINA. HIS OWN POSITION WAS MUCH ENHANCED BY LEADERSHIP ROLE HE TOOK AT MEETING THIS YEAR, AND HE DOUBTLESS FEARS IT COULD NOW BE DAMAGED IN PROPORTION TO EXTENT HE LOSES INITIATIVE. HENCE, HIS INITIAL REACTION TO FACIO DEMARCHE WAS NEGATIVE. REACTION BECAME APPRECIABLY MORE POSITIVE, HOWEVER, AFTER HE RECEIVED CALL FROM ORFILA. OBVIOUSLY HE NOW HOPES TO ENGAGE HIMSELF IN AND PERHAPS TAKE LEADERSHIP IN EFFORT TO LIFT SANCTIONS EARLY. HOWEVER, IT IS CLEAR THAT MODALITIES FOR LIFTING SANCTIONS ARE NOT AS IMPORTANT TO HIM AS THAT ARGENTINA NOT LOSE INITIATIVE.. HENCE, AT THIS POINT HE IS OPEN ON MATTER OF TIMING AND COULD PLAY A USEFUL ROLE FROM STANDPOINT OF USG.

6. AS WE DEPARTED, VIGNES RAISED PALESTINIAN ISSUE, SAYING GOA HAD JUST NOTED IN PRESS THAT BRASIL INTENDED TO PRESS FOR RECOGNITION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE. THIS WOULD PUT ARGENTINA IN VERY DIFFICULT POSITION, HE SAID. ARGENTINA HAD PIONEERED THIRD WORLD POSITION IN LATIN AMERICA AND COULD NOT NOW BE LEFT BEHIND ON SUCH AN ISSUE BY BRAZIL. HENCE, IF BRAZIL REALLY WERE MOVING TOWARD RECOGNITION, ARGENTINA WOULD PROBABLY ALSO MOVE QUICKLY IN THAT DIRECTION.

7. SINCE VIGNES WILL BE IN WASHINGTON SEPT 14-21, I BELIEVE IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN USEFUL RELATIONSHIP SECRETARY KISSINGER HAS DEVELOPED WITH HIM, INVITATION BE EXTENDED TO HIM TO MEET WITH SECRETARY DURING THAT TIME. VIGNES HOPES ALSO TO DEDICATE SAN MARTIN MONUMENT DURING HIS STAY IN WASHINGTON.
UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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